

---

# KEYS TOURISM ADVISORY May 7, 2009, 1:15 p.m.

---

*Information From the Monroe County Tourist Development Council*

---

## WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT INITIATES PHASE III IRRIGATION RESTRICTIONS FOR FLORIDA KEYS, SOUTH MIAMI-DADE

Extremely low levels in wells tapping into the Biscayne Aquifer, are forcing South Florida Water Management District officials to implement one-day-a-week landscape irrigation restrictions in Monroe and South Miami-Dade counties.

Modified Phase III restrictions apply to residents and businesses beginning at Southwest 216th St., in Cutler Bay (near Homestead/Florida City) and extend south through the Florida Keys.

The restrictions are:

- Odd-numbered addresses: Water only on Saturdays from midnight to 10 a.m. and/or 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.
- Even-numbered addresses: Water only on Sundays from midnight to 10 a.m. and/or 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.
- Systems with no street address and systems that irrigate both even and odd addresses within the same zones, including multifamily units, homeowners associations and shopping centers should follow the schedule for even-numbered addresses.

There are exceptions for forms of irrigation that utilize water-conservation techniques. Cisterns and low-volume systems — such as drip, bubble and micro-jet systems that apply water directly to root plant zones — may be used at any time, but should be voluntarily reduced. In addition, irrigation with 100 percent reclaimed water is exempt.

An emergency order, announced Thursday by the district's executive director, also calls for:

- Requesting the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority (FKAA) to activate the Stock Island Seawater Desalination Plant. The plant can produce up to 1.5 million gallons of freshwater per day from ocean saltwater using reverse osmosis.
- Asking FKAA and other utilities to reduce water pressure in their systems.
- Urging utilities and local governments to step up enforcement of irrigation restrictions.
- Sending SFWMD enforcement teams to Homestead, Florida City and Monroe County to ensure permitted water users are following restrictions.

The above restrictions apply specifically to landscape irrigation. There are no restrictions for auto or boat washing or other water uses, district officials said.

Officials report groundwater levels in South Miami-Dade County — where FKAA draws water from the Biscayne Aquifer — have dropped to within the lowest 10 percent of their historical range. The aquifer typically rebounds quickly during rainy season, which might not arrive for several weeks. More details on restrictions are at [www.my.sfwmd.gov](http://www.my.sfwmd.gov) or [www.fkaa.com](http://www.fkaa.com).

###